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THE COERCION OF NUDIST CHILDREN

Stripped of Personal Freedom

by Collette Marie

In 1972, when I was 11 years old, I was molested by a pedophile at Willamettans Nudist camp in Eugene, Oregon.

My father forced me — through psychological manipulation and physical coercion — to strip naked and attend nudist camps when I was a child from the ages of 11 to 14, causing three years of almost unbearable shame, powerlessness, and unhappiness, the effects of which I still suffer today. I am now 29 years old.

The following is the story of how I was forced to attend these camps as a child, and necessarily concerns the ideology of sexism and child abuse that enables the victimization of women and children to occur in this society.

Collette Marie's article, and accompanying drawings, destroy the nudists/naturists' most cherished illusion: the image of the happy, wholesome, smiling, well-adjusted, clothing-optional family.

Nikki Craft

I have always had a strong sense of identity, even as a child. This sense of selfhood included a feeling of the right to have personal space: the need for bodily boundaries and safety, the right to say "no." This inner integrity that I had as a child began to combine with the self-conscious awkwardness of puberty, which for me began at age 11 in the form of small breasts.

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The Coercion of Nudist Children: Why The ICONoclast Vol. 3 No. 1 Still Matters

Source document: The ICONoclast, Spring 1991, Vol. 3, No. 1, published by N.O.P.E. - Naturists and Nudists Opposing Pornographic Exploitation.

The Spring 1991 issue of The ICONoclast is not simply an old newsletter about a dispute inside the nudist/naturist movement. It is a document about children, consent, sexual autonomy, institutional denial, and the way a movement can protect its own public image while leaving children to absorb the consequences of adult ideology.

The issue opens with a blunt declaration: "THE COERCION OF NUDIST CHILDREN." Beneath it is Collette Marie's article, "Stripped of Personal Freedom," accompanied by her drawings and framed by Nikki Craft's editorial statement that the article destroys one of nudism/naturism's most cherished illusions: the image of the happy, wholesome, smiling, well-adjusted clothing-optional family.

That sentence is the key to the issue. The target is not the human body. The target is coercion hidden beneath the language of naturalness, family, freedom, and body acceptance.

> **The issue asks a question that many nudist/naturist organizations did not want asked: what does "freedom" mean when the person expected to be naked is a child?**

A Child's "No" Is Still a No

Collette Marie's account is devastating because it refuses abstraction. She writes as someone who was forced into nudist camps as a child and who understood, long before adults around

her would admit it, that privacy and bodily boundaries are not prudish inventions. They are part of personhood.

The article describes a childhood in which a father's control over his daughter's body was disguised as liberation from shame. Marie explains that she did not experience the camps as freedom. She experienced them as exposure, surveillance, humiliation, and the collapse of her right to say no. The issue does not treat this as an individual family eccentricity. It presents it as a political problem: the coercion of children by adults who have renamed adult preference as family philosophy.

That is the central intervention of this issue. It separates voluntary adult nudity from the forced or pressured exposure of children. It insists that a child's body is not a symbolic object to be used in an adult argument about nature, freedom, art, or repression.

The issue's position statement, "In Matters of Sexual Autonomy: The Child's Right to Freedom From Adult Exploitation," makes the principle explicit. No adult should ask or compel a minor to undress for photography or for any reason other than health requirements. Nude photographs, films, or tapes made under such conditions should not be displayed or distributed. A child's supposed willingness is not enough when adults control the environment, the ideology, the pressure, and the consequences.

This was a radical clarification because it cut through one of the movement's favorite evasions: the claim that children in nudist settings were simply being raised without shame. The ICONoclast answered: shame is not the issue when the problem is adult power.

The Willamettans and the Refusal to Respond

The first half of the issue moves from testimony into accountability. Marie's article is paired with documentation about her attempt to contact the Willamettans, the Oregon nudist camp where she says she was molested as a child. Her questions were basic: what were the camp's policies regarding child molesters? Did camps communicate with each other about men who posed risks? Were repeat offenders barred from events? Why was the man she identified allowed continued access to nudist spaces?

The response, as presented in the issue, was evasive and inadequate. A letter from the Willamettans expressed sympathy but failed to address the substance of the questions. The issue asks the obvious question: if a former child victim of molestation cannot get a meaningful conversation about child protection policies, who can?

Nikki Craft's article "Confronting the Abuser" documents the next step: trying to identify the man Marie remembered as Lonnie and to determine whether he was still active in nudist spaces. The article is careful about what it claims. It does not demand that anyone be put in jail on the basis of the available information. It says that Marie wanted the chance to confront the man who abused her, and that the organizations involved had a responsibility to take the account seriously rather than make the victim fight through denial, vague assurances, and bureaucratic avoidance.

That distinction matters. The issue is not a mob document. It is an accountability document. It exposes the distance between an institution's claim to be a safe family community and its practical unwillingness to investigate when a child victim comes forward.

The Pattern Beyond One Camp

The issue then widens the frame. It does not treat Willamettans as an isolated failure. It places Marie's account alongside reports and commentary involving other nudist/naturist institutions, figures, and publications. The article "Nudist Camp Man of the Year Arrested for Child Porn" presents another example of a man with a history of sexual offenses who had been honored within nudist contexts. The page headed "Children Must Be Nude At Most Nudist Camps" challenges policies that required children to be undressed when present at camp, even when some children felt more comfortable clothed.

The issue's argument is cumulative. It says that when a movement gives adults routine visual and social access to naked children, when it treats objections as prudery, when it dismisses women and children who complain, and when it resists public accountability, then the problem is not accidental. It is structural.

That does not mean every nudist is a predator. The issue does not need that claim. Its stronger claim is that a movement can create ideal conditions for predators while sincere members insist that nothing is wrong. That is often how institutional abuse survives: not through universal malice, but through loyalty, denial, innocence narratives, and fear of public embarrassment.

Body Acceptance Versus Exploitation

One of the most important parts of this issue is that it refuses the false choice between body acceptance and child protection. Nina Silver's article "Body Acceptance VS Exploitation" names the contradiction from inside the clothing-optional world. She writes from the position of someone who valued body freedom, yet became disturbed by the sexualized visual economy around nudist publications and events: the disproportionate use of women's bodies, the pressure on women to perform cheerfulness, and the way children could become absorbed into a culture adults insisted was innocent.

Silver's resignation from The Event deepens that critique. Her open letter says she no longer wanted her name or work associated with the publication. She objected to the repeated use of naked women as sales material, to images of nude beauty pageants, and to the casual mixture of body acceptance rhetoric with eroticized presentation. In the issue, her resignation becomes evidence that the critique was not coming only from outsiders. Women inside the movement were seeing the same problem.

The distinction is essential: a natural, easy, non-exploitative relationship to the body is not the same thing as a culture that makes women and children available to the gaze of men. The issue argues that nudism/naturism had too often used the first idea to protect the second.

Why the Issue Still Matters

The Spring 1991 ICONoclast anticipates the later logic of the Nudist/Naturist Hall of Shame. It gathers testimony, correspondence, organizational replies, public statements, newspaper items, satire, art, and political analysis into a single argument: when adults build institutions around access to naked bodies, children require more protection, not less.

The issue is also an example of Craft's archival method before the Internet made such work easier. It is not polished institutional research. It is assembled resistance: clippings, letters, witness accounts, direct questions, names, dates, and public challenges arranged so that private knowledge cannot remain safely private. Its design is part of its politics. Headlines shout. Boxes interrupt. Testimony sits beside institutional correspondence. Drawings force the reader to remain with the child's point of view. The form itself refuses decorum.

That refusal was necessary. Respectable language often protects institutions better than it protects children. This issue chose another path. It made the contradiction visible: adults called it freedom; children could experience it as coercion. Adults called it natural; predators could use it as access. Adults called critics prudish; victims called it harm.

The most powerful thing about the issue is that it does not let the movement hide behind its best intentions. It asks what happens in practice. Who is watched? Who is photographed? Who is pressured? Who is dismissed? Who is protected? Who is believed?

Those questions remain urgent. They apply far beyond nudist camps. They belong wherever adult ideologies require children to surrender boundaries for the comfort, politics, fantasies, or reputations of adults.

The ICONoclast Vol. 3, No. 1 is therefore not only a record of one controversy inside the nudist/naturist movement. It is a feminist document about consent before consent was fashionable language; about child sexual autonomy before institutions wanted to hear it; and about the cost of forcing women and children to pretend that danger is merely discomfort.

It belongs in the archive because it saw the problem clearly, named it directly, and preserved the evidence when the easier path would have been silence.

Sources and Related Documents

This companion article restates and contextualizes the primary source. It does not add factual claims beyond what The ICONoclast, Vol. 3, No. 1 itself documents. The principal source material includes Collette Marie's first-person testimony, her correspondence with the Willamettans, Nikki Craft's "Confronting the Abuser," the issue's child sexual-autonomy position statement, and Nina Silver's "Body Acceptance VS Exploitation" and resignation letter from The Event.

Alongside the Summer 1989 issue of The ICONoclast, this record is direct evidence against any characterization of the publication as pornography. Its contents are survivor testimony, institutional-accountability documentation, policy language, feminist analysis, and a stated protective standard concerning children. The material is presented to expose exploitation and demand accountability, not for arousal.

Related records in the UD series include the Lawrence Stanley and Uncommon Desires materials; the Nudist/Naturist Hall of Shame; the earlier Stanley photograph article, which cites this issue as a source; and the Summer 1989 ICONoclast companion issue. Read together, these documents trace a developing record of feminist investigation, institutional response, and child-protection advocacy.

Archival Assessment

This issue is devastating and historically important. It is not just an expose; it is an argument built from survivor testimony, correspondence, institutional responses, policy language, feminist analysis, and visual documentation.

The strongest thing about the issue is its structure. It does not merely say that there is a problem. It shows the machinery: forced childhood nudity, institutional minimization, letters that fail to answer the real questions, body-acceptance language that can become cover for exploitation, and NOPE trying to create a child-protection standard.

That makes the issue powerful as both a political document and an archival object. The issue is the primary source; this article is the guide that helps future readers understand why it mattered.

Publication and Collaboration Note

Prepared for the Nikki Craft Archival Project in collaboration with AI-assisted research and editorial tools. The historical record, analysis, and political framework are Nikki Craft's.